



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

[Docket No. FMCSA-2022-0046]

Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Epilepsy and Seizure Disorders

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of applications for exemption; request for comments.

SUMMARY: FMCSA announces receipt of applications from 20 individuals for an exemption from the prohibition in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) against persons with a clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition that is likely to cause a loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) to drive in interstate commerce. If granted, the exemptions would enable these individuals who have had one or more seizures and are taking anti-seizure medication to operate CMVs in interstate commerce.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before [Insert date 30 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by the Federal Docket Management System Docket No. FMCSA-2022-0046 using any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to www.regulations.gov/, insert the docket number (FMCSA-2022-0046) in the keyword box and click “Search.” Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, and click on the “Comment” button. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- Mail: Dockets Operations; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- Hand Delivery: West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC, 20590-0001 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.

To avoid duplication, please use only one of these four methods. See the “Public Participation” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for instructions on submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Christine A. Hydock, Chief, Medical Programs Division, FMCSA, DOT, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W64-224, Washington, DC 20590-0001, (202) 366-4001, fmcsamedical@dot.gov. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. If you have questions regarding viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Dockets Operations, (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Public Participation

A. Submitting Comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this notice (Docket No. FMCSA-2022-0046), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. You may submit your comments and material online or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. FMCSA recommends that you include your name and a mailing address, an email address, or a phone number in the body of your document so that FMCSA can contact you if there are questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to www.regulations.gov/docket?D=FMCSA-2022-0046. Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, click the “Comment” button, and type your comment into the text box on the following screen. Choose whether you are submitting your comment as an individual or on behalf of a third party and then submit.

If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. FMCSA will consider all comments and material received during the comment period.

B. Viewing Comments

To view comments, go to www.regulations.gov. Insert the docket number (FMCSA-2022-0046) in the keyword box and click “Search.” Next, sort the results by “Posted (Newer-Older),” choose the first notice listed, and click “Browse Comments.” If you do not have access to the internet, you may view the docket online by visiting Dockets Operations in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the DOT West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366-9317 or (202) 366-9826 before visiting Dockets Operations.

C. Privacy Act

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(6), DOT solicits comments from the public on the exemption request. DOT posts these comments, without edit, including any personal information the commenter provides, to www.regulations.gov. As described in the system of records notice DOT/ALL 14 (Federal Docket Management System (FDMS)), which can be reviewed at <https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/privacy/privacy-act-system-records-notice>, the comments are searchable by the name of the submitter.

II. Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA may grant an exemption from the FMCSRs for no longer than a 5-year period if it finds such exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such exemption. The statutes allow the Agency to renew exemptions at the end of the 5-year period. FMCSA grants medical exemptions from the FMCSRs for a 2-year period to align with the maximum duration of a driver's medical certification.

The 20 individuals listed in this notice have requested an exemption from the epilepsy and seizure disorders prohibition in 49 CFR 391.41(b)(8). Accordingly, the Agency will evaluate the qualifications of each applicant to determine whether granting the exemption will achieve the required level of safety mandated by statute.

The physical qualification standard for drivers regarding epilepsy found in § 391.41(b)(8) states that a person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person has no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition which is likely to cause the loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a CMV.

In addition to the regulations, FMCSA has published advisory criteria¹ to assist medical examiners (MEs) in determining whether drivers with certain medical conditions are qualified to operate a CMV in interstate commerce.

The criteria states that if an individual has had a sudden episode of a non-epileptic seizure or loss of consciousness of unknown cause that did not require anti-seizure medication, the decision whether that person's condition is likely to cause the loss of consciousness or loss of ability to control a CMV should be made on an individual basis by the ME in consultation with the treating physician. Before certification is considered, it is suggested that a 6-month waiting period elapse from the time of the episode.

¹ These criteria may be found in APPENDIX A TO PART 391—MEDICAL ADVISORY CRITERIA, section H. *Epilepsy*: § 391.41(b)(8), paragraphs 3, 4, and 5, which is available on the internet at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title49-vol5/pdf/CFR-2015-title49-vol5-part391-appA.pdf>.

Following the waiting period, it is suggested that the individual have a complete neurological examination. If the results of the examination are negative and anti-seizure medication is not required, then the driver may be qualified.

In those individual cases where a driver has had a seizure or an episode of loss of consciousness that resulted from a known medical condition (e.g., drug reaction, high temperature, acute infectious disease, dehydration, or acute metabolic disturbance), certification should be deferred until the driver has recovered fully from that condition, has no existing residual complications, and is not taking anti-seizure medication.

Drivers who have a history of epilepsy/seizures, off anti-seizure medication, and seizure-free for 10 years, may be qualified to operate a CMV in interstate commerce. Interstate drivers with a history of a single unprovoked seizure may be qualified to drive a CMV in interstate commerce if seizure-free and off anti-seizure medication for a 5-year period or more.

As a result of MEs misinterpreting advisory criteria as regulation, numerous drivers have been prohibited from operating a CMV in interstate commerce based on the fact that they have had one or more seizures and are taking anti-seizure medication, rather than an individual analysis of their circumstances by a qualified ME based on the physical qualification standards and medical best practices.

On January 15, 2013, FMCSA announced in a notice of final disposition titled, “Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Epilepsy and Seizure Disorders,” (78 FR 3069), its decision to grant requests from 20 individuals for exemptions from the regulatory requirement that interstate CMV drivers have “no established medical history or clinical diagnosis of epilepsy or any other condition which is likely to cause loss of consciousness or any loss of ability to control a CMV.” Since that time, the Agency has published additional notices granting requests from individuals for exemptions from the regulatory requirement regarding epilepsy found in § 391.41(b)(8).

To be considered for an exemption from the epilepsy and seizure disorders prohibition in § 391.41(b)(8), applicants must meet the criteria in the 2007 recommendations of the Agency's Medical Expert Panel (78 FR 3069).

III. Qualifications of Applicants

Glen Becht

Glen Becht is a 42-year-old class D license holder in Tennessee. He has a history of grand mal seizure and has been seizure free since 2011. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2016. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Becht receiving an exemption.

Cassie Caldera

Cassie Caldera is a 33-year-old class R license holder in Colorado. She has a history of generalized convulsive epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2012. She has not taken anti-seizure medication since 2013. Her physician states that she is supportive of Ms. Caldera receiving an exemption.

Joseph Carlisle

Joseph Carlisle is a 42-year-old class A license holder in Illinois. He has a history of juvenile myoclonic epilepsy and has been seizure free over 20 years. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same for over 6 years. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Carlisle receiving an exemption.

Samuel Collins

Samuel Collins is a 61-year-old class B commercial driver's license (CDL) holder in South Carolina. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2009. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2017. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Collins receiving an exemption.

Michael Day

Michael Day is a 47-year-old class A CDL holder in Arizona. He has a history of generalized epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2002. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2002. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Day receiving an exemption.

Kevin Finan

Kevin Finan is a 35-year-old class D license holder in Ohio. He has a history of juvenile myoclonic epilepsy and has been seizure free for over 10 years. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2014. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Finan receiving an exemption.

Brian Graham

Brian Graham is a 47-year-old class A CDL holder in Montana. He has a history of generalized epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2002. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2014. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Graham receiving an exemption.

Andrew Greenawalt

Andrew Greenawalt is a 24-year-old class C license holder in Pennsylvania. He has a history of seizure disorder and has been seizure free since 2013. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2017. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Greenawalt receiving an exemption.

Michael McKinlay

Michael McKinlay is a 36-year-old class F license holder in Missouri. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2010. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2010. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. McKinlay receiving an exemption.

Roger Moats

Roger Moats is a 50-year-old class A CDL holder in Oklahoma. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 1988. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 1988. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Moats receiving an exemption.

Jordan Moriarty

Jordan Moriarty is a 40-year-old class D license holder in Vermont. He has a history of epilepsy with generalized seizures and has been seizure free since 2010. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2010. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Moriarty receiving an exemption.

Michael Morris

Michael Morris is a 46-year-old class A CDL holder in Oregon. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2007. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same for over 12 years. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Morris receiving an exemption.

Keith Pitzen

Keith Pitzen is a 65-year-old class A CDL holder in Iowa. He has a history of partial epilepsy with secondary generalized seizures and has been seizure free since 2011. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2011. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Pitzen receiving an exemption.

Matthew Raymond

Matthew Raymond is a 34-year-old class B CDL holder in New York. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 1999. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 1999. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Raymond receiving an exemption.

Juan Rios

Juan Rios is a 23-year-old class C license holder in Texas. He has a history of epilepsy and has been seizure free since 2012. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2018. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Rios receiving an exemption.

Jason Russell

Jason Russell is a 49-year-old class B license holder in Iowa. He has a history of seizure disorder and has been seizure free since 2001. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2019. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Russell receiving an exemption.

Reuben Sheets

Rueben Sheets is a 44-year-old class DM license holder in New York. He has a history of remote seizure and has been seizure free since 1996. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2017. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Sheets receiving an exemption.

Eric Stucky

Eric Stucky is a 48-year-old class A CDL holder in Utah. He has a history of seizure and has been seizure free since 1996. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2013. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Stucky receiving an exemption.

Thomas Weber

Thomas Weber is a 44-year-old class D license holder in New York. He has a history of seizure disorder and has been seizure free since 2010. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2010. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. Weber receiving an exemption.

Daniel White

Daniel White is a 46-year-old class A CDL holder in Nebraska. He has a history of seizure disorder and has been seizure free since 2012. He takes anti-seizure medication with the dosage and frequency remaining the same since 2019. His physician states that he is supportive of Mr. White receiving an exemption.

IV. Request for Comments

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. 31136(e) and 31315(b), FMCSA requests public comment from all interested persons on the exemption petitions described in this notice. We will consider all comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated under the **DATES** section of the notice.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator for Policy.